

Australian Ballot and Informational Hearings

How do towns give notice of the public informational hearing that is required when using the Australian ballot system of voting?

The selectboard must hold a public informational hearing when a town uses the Australian ballot system of voting on any public question or its budget. 17 V.S.A. § 2680(g). The informational hearing, which is administered by the selectboard, must be held within the 10 days immediately preceding the town meeting at which the Australian ballot system of voting is to be used. The purpose of the informational hearing leading up to the Australian ballot vote is to afford the electorate an opportunity to discuss the article(s) on which they will be voting.

The informational hearing must be warned at least 10 days in advance by posting notice of the hearing in at least two public places in town and in the town clerk's office.

Note that if the town has voted to change the date of its annual town meeting to one of the three days preceding the first Tuesday in March, then the public informational hearing may be held in conjunction with that town meeting, in which case the moderator presides. 17 V.S.A. § 2680(g)(2)(B).

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